

410 Poissie Chang. No 3

# Opening Address,

TO THE  
  
YOUNG MEN'S  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION,  
OF  
THREE RIVERS.

---

DELIVERED 16th DECEMBER 1851.

---

*By a Scotchman and a Soldier.*

---

THREE RIVERS:  
PRINTED BY GEORGE STOBBS,  
1852.

I  
M  
C  
T  
H  
M  
A  
T  
C  
T  
I  
L  
T  
I  
A  
F  
'T  
W

An  
Sp  
An  
Th  
An

## OPENING ADDRESS,

&c. &c. &c.

---

Three of the changing seasons of the year  
Have circled round since our last meeting here ;  
Nature assumed the mantle of the spring,  
Called on the flowers to bloom and birds to sing ;  
The feather'd choir, in sweet and artless lays  
Raised their glad hymn of gratitude and praise ;  
May's gentle sun smiled on the crocus' birth,  
And bade her lovely sisters venture forth :  
The daffodil, regardless of the cold,  
Comes breathing fragrance and enrobed in gold ;  
The fair narcissës like a bride is dress'd  
In virgin beauty and in snowy vest ;  
Like modest worth, averse to pomp and show,  
The cow-slips and the daisies meekly bow ;  
In royal robes the princely tulips bloom,  
And pinks and hyacinths waft their rich perfume ;  
Fruit trees and shrubs unfold their blossoms fair,  
'Til grateful odours fill the scented air ;  
While flow'rs and shrubs, and blossoms of the  
trees  
Are thick with humming birds and busy bees ;  
Spontaneous herbage deck'd the fields around,  
And clothed the meadows and the pasture ground ;  
The farmer plowed and sowed the mellow soil  
And marked the shooting blade with hopeful smile.

Then came the Summer with her sunny showers,  
 Her bunch of fruits and rich bouquet of flowers,  
 And threw her ripening mantle o'er the plain  
 Of scented clover and of waving grain ;  
 The lusty mowers sweep across the field,  
 And reckon all the beauty by the yield ;  
 The ardent sun, with strong and fervent ray,  
 Converts the fragrant grasses into hay.  
 Mature and full the oats and barley fade,  
 And the ripe wheat bows down his hoary head ;  
 The reapers now the glancing sickle wield,  
 And sheaves and stooks adorn the harvest field ;  
 The fine potatoe, mealy, rich and dry,  
 Yield for our table their esteemed supply ;  
 The worthy swede, the carrot and the beet  
 Lay down their juicy offerings at our feet,  
 While generous Autumn with approving smile  
 Rewards the husbandman for all his toil,  
 Fills up his barns with the precious store,  
 Until his heart can scarcely wish for more.  
 The ample root-house well secured from cold  
 Receives in charge the vegetable gold.  
 And now old stormy Winter comes again,  
 Seals up the lake and glues the frozen plain ;  
 Warns ships of commerce from our icy shore  
 And for five months our steam boats ply no more.  
 Short is the visit of the prince of day,  
 Wan is his look and feeble is his ray,  
 While from the north the chilling breezes blow  
 And over Nature falls the robe of snow.  
 My dear young friends, now is the time to find  
 The best employment for the active mind,



Long winter ev'nings and a cheerful fire  
 With useful books and all you can desire  
 Makes careful reading now a choice employ,  
 And spreads a feast of intellectual joy.  
 Perusing history's entertaining page  
 Which stretches back through many a distant age,  
 From tribes and families you nations trace  
 And note the onward progress of our race;  
 You mark improvement where it first began  
 And trace it through the history of man.  
 How very interesting 'tis to know  
 What happened in our country long ago,  
 How our forefather's lived in former days,  
 Their dress, their manners, and their simple ways;  
 The cruel customs and the barbarous laws,  
 Their dark conceptions of a Ruling cause;  
 Their superstitions, and the fearful crimes  
 Which stained their altars in the Druid times.  
 Contrast the wigwam and the clay-built cell  
 With the proud hall where their descendants  
 dwell,  
 See how their works of art would now compare  
 With works of science at the World's Fair,  
 Where yon transparent palace shines so bright,  
 Rearing its chrystal form of lucid light,  
 Fair as the silver moon's unclouded beam  
 Like some celestial temple in a dream;  
 Where peaceful nations mingle from afar,  
 Who never met before except in war;  
 In friendly greetings grasp the proffer'd hand,  
 Like brothers meeting in a distant land;

While art and science with becoming grace  
 Present their trophies at the shrine of peace.  
 Fair Canada appears among the rest  
 And hears her splendid engine judged the best ;  
 Her handsome sleighs and robes are duly seen  
 And high'y praised by her admiring queen ;  
 Her downy blankets and her produce too  
 Receive the premiums which are justly due ;  
 And had her lovely daughters but been there  
 They'd been pronounced the fairest of the fair,  
 And borne with triumph off the highest prize,  
 For modest beauty and for sparkling eyes.

But I digress :

Works on mechanics claim your due regard  
 And bring a careful reading rich reward ;  
 Biography presents before your view  
 The wise, the great, the worthy and the true ;  
 Learn from their wisdom, imitate their worth,  
 Their moral greatness—not their rank by birth.  
 Read poetry, of that improving kind  
 Which elevates and purifies the mind ;  
 When inspiration breathes its " soul of fire,"  
 And gifted genius plays upon the lyre.  
 But feeble crawling verse, or bombast rhyme,  
 Reading such trash is worse than wasting time.  
 When pleasing fiction as the friend of truth  
 Conveys instruction to the mind of youth,  
 Presents fair Virtue in her lovely dress  
 And hateful Vice in native ugliness :  
 Then airy Fancy, with her magic power,  
 At times may entertain a leisure hour ;

But frothy novels, like indifferent rhyme,  
Are neither worth your money nor your time.

We fain would hope, before this winter's through  
To get a lecture here from each of you,  
Exert yourselves and see what you can do ;  
Prepare the Essay with judicious care,  
And leave behind you bashfulness and fear.

I thank you for the kindness you have shown  
In listening to this effort of my own,  
Allow me now to place before your view  
A local picture which I lately drew,  
And with permission dedicate to you.

Truth has pencil'd the sketch, but fancy did aid  
To finish the picture with colour and shade.

### DRIVE TO SHEWANAGAN.

When sweet blooming maidens and sprightly young  
beaus

Light-hearted and happy as you may suppose,  
And matrons and husbands as well as the rest  
Are seated with those who they still love the best,  
And now with the young people cheerfully join  
It puts them in mind of the days of longsyne ;  
And lonely old bachelors of forty and one  
Club in with the party for Shewanagan ;  
September's mild morning has opened the day,  
Then over the Coteau—hurrah, and away.

The sun has just glanced o'er the fields and the  
woods,  
And with glory has tinted the eastern clouds ;

The morning is lovely, the prospect is fine,  
 And the beautiful scenery all but divine.  
 Far off in the distance, and glitt'ring in light,  
 The College of Nicolet breaks on the sight ;  
 Near the tall group of pines you distinguish the  
 spire,

Now glancing like silver, now gleaming like fire,  
 The princely Saint Lawrence, magnificent stream,  
 Reflects on his waters the bright solar beam ;  
 And the picture inverted appears on his tide  
 Of the homes and the trees on the opposite side.  
 Where the dense cloud of smoke is dark'ning the  
 sky

You see that a steam-boat is just passing by,  
 And perceive when a close inspection you make,  
 A ship on each bow, and a brig in her wake,  
 With merchandize laden from old mother land,  
 Or teas, silks, and spices from India's strand ;  
 Yon island of timber, descending, no doubt,  
 Contributes to pay for the good things brought out.  
 Now the Banlieu presents a broad fertile plain,  
 Here moving with cattle, there waving with grain,  
 While our own little town, so quiet and still,  
 Appears fast asleep at the foot of the hill.

The clear silver dew-drops distill'd in the night  
 Like miniature lamps are all glow'ing with light,  
 Or like beautiful diamonds sparkle and shine  
 On each blade of grass and each needle of pine,  
 While planted and tended by Nature's fair hand  
 Bloom the wild forest flow'rs 'mongst hillocks of  
 sand ;



The rich golden rod waves in grandeur and pride  
 With the michaelmas daisy close by his side,  
 And hundreds beside of the sweet floral race  
 Might bloom round a palace for beauty and grace,  
 Here meekly in solitude blossom and die  
 Uncull'd by the hand and unseen by the eye.

Now improvement reveals how industry and  
 toil  
 Makes the lonely place glad and the wilderness  
 smile ;

Where the elm and maple and cedar had stood  
 And pine trees for ages frowned over the wood,  
 Now the barns and stables and cottages stand  
 And autumn with plenty enriches the land.  
 Behold the sweet picture of comfort and peace  
 And the angel of Hope smiling over the place,  
 In yon little dwelling, tho' humble and low,  
 As clean as a palace and white as the snow,  
 For Pierre and Jossette in a very short time  
 Had painted their house with a bucket of lime ;  
 And now round the windows so charmingly bright  
 The green clusters of hops contrast with the white.  
 See the trim little garden blooming close by,  
 With fence of dry cord-wood piled neatly and high,  
 And the small native grove of elm and pine  
 Which remains to tell of the days of langsyne.  
 The oats and the wheat bending over the ground,  
 And the peas and potatoes growing around.  
 Glance inside the cottage, where Jossette is seen  
 Busy at work and as happy as a queen,  
 While making her carpet of good cataline,  
 Or quilting the coverlet neatly and fine ;

Her light-hearted children so healthy and clean  
 Are playing at horses outside on the green,  
 The arch little kitten in front of the house  
 Is now catching her tail instead of a mouse ;  
 The fine speckled top knots, the good people's  
 pride,

Are picking their dinner along the road-side,  
 The turkies are seeking what fortune may yield',  
 And hunting for grasshoppers over the field ;  
 The gander is threatening whoever may pass  
 Where his wife and the goslings are nipping the  
 grass,

The duck and her children are sure to be found  
 In the small running brook, the ditch or the pond,  
 The little fat poney, the sheep and the cow,  
 The fam'ly of pigs and the old mother sow  
 Are strolling at freedom all over the wood  
 And feeding wherever the pasture is good ;  
 While Pierre's cheerful measure rings over the  
 plain

As he lustily sings and cradles the grain ;  
 For his barn and root house will shortly be stored  
 With the bountiful crops his acres afford,  
 And furnished with cord-wood an ample supply  
 The frost and the snow he can safely defy.

How hand-some the epinettes, scattered around  
 With their wide-spreading branches close to the  
 ground.

'Mongst the beautiful moss all feathered and curl'd  
 And enough for half the bazaars in the world.  
 But here is the post, with directions to show  
 The road we should take for the Forges below ;

And O, for the power of the artist to trace  
 The scenery around this beautiful place.  
 Our party entranced remain for a time  
 To gaze on the picture so grand and sublime ;  
 The stately river and magnificent wood  
 Enriching the landscape with forest and flood ;  
 The bright yellow fields, which the autumn has  
 crown'd.

The pasture where cattle are dotting the ground ;  
 The sweet little brook, winding peaceful and slow  
 Through the street of cottages whiter than snow ;  
 The bonny green braes where, as blithesome as  
 May

The light-hearted children are busy at play ;  
 The friendly old Hall, hospitality's seat,  
 Still looking across to the quiet Retreat.  
 The eye with delight wanders over the scene,  
 So wild and romantic, so calm and serene ;  
 This picture of beauty we must now leave behind  
 For our party are off for the Grés like the wind,  
 And quickly are lost 'mong't the broad forest trees  
 Whose rich leafy honors are fanned by the breeze.

How delightful the drive through this natural  
 grove  
 Which our young people styled the valley of love ;  
 For here a sly Cupid, so rosy and fair,  
 Had stole in the waggon with each happy pair ;  
 And the mischievous urchin one plainly might see  
 Was as busy at work as busy could be.  
 At th: youth in his teens he levelled a dart  
 Which sent such a thrill of delight through his heart ;

Such a rapt'rous bliss, a confusion and joy,  
 As fairly bewildered the poor happy boy,  
 Who felt so bewitched 'neath the wonderful spell  
 That he scarcely knew what to think or to tell,  
 A - h - sighed to the maid, so tender and true,  
 " Come tell me dear lassie the way for to woo."  
 Fair Emily blushed, like the opening of day.  
 When the twilight of morning has just passed away  
 The pledge of affection which spoke from her eye  
 Was love's modest glance and the maiden's reply.  
 The married man too thought his own bonny wife  
 Had never looked half so sweet in her life,  
 For love in a cottage, though all very good,  
 Is not so romantic as love in a wood ;  
 In the forest where roads are not just the best  
 Then his arm would so gently slip round her waist,  
 And when with the jolting she sometimes would  
     start  
 He fondly would press her more close to his heart.  
 The very old Bachelors felt the soft power,  
 Or something to which they were strangers before ;  
 They hinted in language both simple and plain  
 They would never go there so lonely again ;  
 And shouted in chorus an old Scotch lay,  
 Called, " O to be married if this be the way."  
 Emerging at length from this region of dreams,  
 Where Cupid resides near the sweet winding  
     streams,  
 So deliciously cool and lucidly clear,  
 No wonder that Fairies and Cupids live here.  
 We now have descended the steep winding hill  
 And are safely arrived at Gordonstown Mill,



Where eighty bright saws are all busy at play  
 Incessantly plying by night and by day ;  
 Our inquisitive friends soon examine each part  
 Of this trophy of skill and mechanical art.  
 And when they've inspected the mill and the dall,  
 And have paid their respects at Baptist-ville Hall,  
 From this friendly mansion they shortly repair  
 To Saint Thomas's Street in Saint George's Square  
 Where the relics of ancient grandeur are found  
 In the giant stumps that are dotting the ground.  
 Here a vessel is chartered with master and man,  
 To carry our party to Shawanagah ;  
 And the ladies, with all due caution and care,  
 Are placed where there's nothing like danger to  
 fear.

The rest of the party are set to the oar,  
 Or to balance the craft behind and before,  
 But the poor wounded youth who Cupid had shot  
 Is obliged to lie down to steady the boat,  
 While a knowing old rogue has taken his place  
 And is slyly smiling in Emily's face.  
 And would you believe it, the naughty bad man,  
 Is wooing the maiden as fast as he can ;  
 Tho' Emily wishes him over the sea  
 At " John O'Groat's House " or at " Donachedee,"  
 And William, poor fellow, is thinking no doubt  
 'Bout pistols and seconds and calling him out.  
 But now they are launch'd on the stream, and  
 away  
 For to witness the storm of thunder and spray ;  
 The neat little vessel glides off like a swan,  
 Then hurrah for the Falls of Shawanagan.

Now the indian canoe is wafted along  
 As the light paddle moves to the cadence of song,  
 While "Row, brothers, row," from the lips of  
 the fair

Is warb'ed in low thrilling melody there :  
 Or "Sweet vale of Ovoca," floats over the stream  
 And invests with enchantment the beautiful dream,  
 Or the fine touching song of the "Old Arm Chair."  
 Till the bright eye of beauty is dimm'd with a tear ;  
 When some old bate e'er, to awaken a laugh,  
 Strikes up "Rory O More," or "Lary O Gaff,"  
 When the key bugle sings in melodious strain,  
 "Lovely young Jessie, the Flower of Dumblane,"  
 The national anthem swells over the wave  
 Till echo repeats from the wood and the cave ;  
 While as far as the vision can compass the scene  
 Lies the primitive forest sublime and serene ;  
 Where the noble Saint Maurice, unfettered and  
 free,

Sweeps so proudly and calmly along to the sea.  
 Magnificent river ! how peaceful and still  
 Thy waters glide past 'neath the forest clad hill ;  
 And how splendid the mirror thy stream does  
 supply

To the beautiful moon and the gems of the sky ;  
 Reflecting the cloud by the light breezes driven,  
 The blue vaulted dome, and the scen'ry of heaven.  
 Flow on mighty current, in majesty flow  
 With thy pine and maple trees pictured below.  
 Here nature in glory and grandeur is seen  
 In crimson and scarlet and yellow and green,

The beautiful mantle of varied dyes  
Which the pleasant month of September supplies ;  
When the chill breath of night descends on the  
breeze

And tinges the delicate leaves of the trees,  
Announcing, that nature now covered with gladness  
Must soon wear the garment of sorrow and sadness.

Our tiny bark clipper, tho' slender and slight,  
And built of material so simple and light,  
Has now made the harbour, and finished her trip  
As steady and safe as a ninety gun ship ;  
And our party have voted the visitors' pine  
As the very best place to rest and to dine.

'Neath that broad forest tree they gather around  
An excellent dinner laid out on the ground ;  
For tho' in the wilderness, lonely and vast,  
They had never made up their minds for to fast.  
For the guidance of such as intend going there  
Just allow me to mention our small bill of fare :  
A fine leg of mutton, a quarter of lamb,  
A large pigeon pie, five tongues and a ham ;  
Corn'd beef, apple pudding, and all very nice,  
Tarts, mustard and vinegar, pepper and spice,  
With apples and pickles, as much as you please,  
And crackers and biscuit, and butter and cheese.  
And then for to drink with this very good cheer  
We had wine, lemonade and excellent beer ;  
Aye and plenty besides : why, now let me see,  
There were jars of coffee and bottles of tea,  
And something teatotalers brought in a can  
To mix with the waters of Shawanagan.

In short such a dinner has seldom been seen  
 Since the famous "Wedding of Ballyporeen,"  
 And as we partook of this elegant feast  
 We sat as the Persians do in the East,  
 Tho' not on soft cushions so costly and fine  
 As that people use when they gossip or dine,  
 But the beautiful carpet which nature had spread,  
 And the old forest trees waving over our head.

We now proceed the winding path to trace  
 Which leads along the mountain's rugged face :  
 You climb the steep ascent by slow degrees  
 Obstructed often by the fallen trees,  
 Those prostrate giants, who for ages stood  
 The guard of honor round the mighty flood ;  
 Humbled and fallen from their lofty state  
 They form the simple bridge or lowly seat.  
 Now the hoarse thunder breaks upon your ear  
 From the incessant tempest raging near ;  
 The solid rock beneath you seems to shake ;  
 It trembles, shudders, and you feel it quake ;  
 When lo ! in stormy power and raging white  
 The Triple Fall bursts full upon your sight,  
 And from the summit of the dizzy steep  
 You watch the strong convulsions of the deep,  
 All giddy levity is left behind  
 And solemn awe invests the thoughtful mind.  
 As when with chastened feelings you have trod  
 The steps ascending to the house of God,  
 Becoming reverence for the sacred place,  
 And Him, whose presence fills the throne of grace,

Sub  
 And  
 So at  
 One  
 Whil  
 Roar  
 Loud  
 Sung  
 And  
 The  
 The  
 Surr  
 Whe  
 The  
 The  
 Is so  
 Whi  
 Is da  
 The  
 Rec  
 Obs  
 Sen  
 The  
 Like  
 The  
 Esc  
 To  
 Giv  
 Wh  
 And  
 M  
 Wh



Subdued your spirits at the House of Prayer,  
And checked each trifling thought intruding there.  
So at this temple, solemn and profound,  
One feels as if they trod on holy ground,  
While the dread torrent and the stormy maze  
Roars forth in thunder the Eternal's praise.  
Loud is the anthem and the hymn sublime  
Sung through all ages since the birth of time,  
And still sets forth as when it first began  
The power of God, the nothingness of man.  
The ancient forest, silent and serene,  
Surrounds with grandeur the imposing scene  
Where God is seen in nature's varied form,  
The smiling sunshine and the raging storm.  
The shady foliage of the maple trees  
Is scarcely quivering in the gentle breeze,  
While the proud rapid river, strong and deep,  
Is dashed with fury o'er the awful steep ;  
The mighty basin, girded by the rock,  
Receives the torrent and sustains the shock,  
(Obstructing masses 'mid the falling floods,  
Send the wild waters half way to the clouds ;  
The drizzling spray a mild and constant shower  
Like gentle dew falls on the forest flower,  
The boiling waters from the fearful whirl  
Escape in rapids down the edying swirl,  
To where the channel soon becoming wide,  
Gives scope and freedom to the rushing tide,  
When all the tempest's wild commotions cease  
And the smooth river glides along in peace.  
Much of the rocky bed is now laid dry,  
Which partly forms the Fall when floods are high,

---

Here in September you may safely stray  
Where the strong current sweeps in early May,  
Inspect each hollow niche and flood-formed cell  
And cull from rocky chink the sweet "blue bell;"  
Tall forest trees, and logs of every form  
Washed by the waves and battered by the storm  
Fling o'er those rocks lie rudely cast away  
To bleach unheeded in the sunny ray.

We leave the falls, with minds impressed with  
awe.  
Delighted and improved by all we saw,  
And down the peaceful stream we float away,  
While "Home, sweet Home" becomes the closing  
lay.